

Testimony Before the Public Safety and Security Committee  
Thursday, March 14, 2013

Good morning Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and committee members. My name is Gretchen Vivier, and I live in West Hartford. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

First, I would like to extend special thanks to my own representative, Joe Verrengia. He has worked diligently for many years protecting our safety in West Hartford as a police officer. His input was critical to the school safety plans in our town. I have spoken to him about his role as Vice Chair to this committee, and I know he takes it seriously. He has first-hand experience on the effects of gun violence. But he has not stopped there. He is making sure he also has the research to make informed and thoughtful decisions.

Rather than speaking to the merits of each individual bill being heard today, I will simply tell you what I am for. In a general way, I support Governor Malloy's gun safety proposals.

I urge you to pass legislation with the following components:

1. A ban on the sale of military style assault weapons – this is not new to Connecticut. We've had a ban since 1994; it just needs updating to remove large loopholes.
2. A ban on the possession of large capacity magazines
3. Expanding safe storage laws.
4. Requiring universal background checks – including private sales
5. Requiring registration of all handguns with annual renewal (we have to register our cars, but not our guns?)
6. Requiring a permit to purchase and carry all guns and ammunition
7. Limiting handgun sales to one gun per month.

What's more a Quinnipiac Poll showed that Connecticut residents also support these provisions at a rate of at least two to one – in some instances up to 86%. (See <http://courantblogs.com/capitol-watch/Quinnipiac-gun-poll-voters-arent-uncertain>). You will notice that even gun owners support many of these provisions. Even where they don't, there is a large minority among them that support the idea. Remember, too, that only 35% of the people in this nation are gun owners. **There is a clear mandate for you to enact these changes NOW.**

There was also a recent study showing that stricter gun laws prevent gun violence. I know you've seen it because I emailed a copy to every legislator in the building.

So, please, act now. Act before there are any more tragedies. Please.